

Transport Group Report for FoBRA Committee Meeting of 9 September 2021

Live Consultations

(i) WECA Bristol to Bath Survey (CLOSES 10 September!)

Relevance: This survey is aimed at those who use the A4 route between Bristol and Bath, whether by car, bike, bus or in any other way and has the objective of making travel more sustainable. It is quite a detailed survey about current travel habits and views, and is of relevance principally to frequent users of the route or those close to the route.

Website Address: <https://consultation.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/infrastructure/bristolto bathsurvey/>

(ii) (a) Local Plan Partial Update (LPPU) - public consultation and (b) B&NES Transport and Developments Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): public consultation (Closes 8 October)

Relevance: The LPPU consultation includes updates of various transport-related policies which are intended to rebalance approach to travel and transport in light of Climate and Ecological Emergency. Relevant policies include ensuring that sustainable transport modes are considered first in looking at the location and design of new development, embedding the principles of Liveable Neighbourhoods; requiring development to enhance, rather than just maintain, recreational or active travel routes; and changing the standards applied to parking provision and design. There is a separate heading for Park & Ride, covering the proposal to make them “transport interchanges” and enable a wider range of activities and events. The response form is constructed to accept freeform comments on specific policies referenced by Paragraph number, Policy number and Policy Map Layer. The SPD is supplementary to transport policies in the Local Plan Update (also currently in consultation ending 8 October) and covers updating of rules relating to designing Active Travel, Parking, Low-emission vehicles and Travel Plans into developments and redevelopments to support increased sustainability.

Website address: <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/transport-and-development-SPD-consultation>

(iii) Key Route Networks: devolving more powers and responsibilities for locally important roads to metro mayors and their combined authorities (Closes 24 September)

Relevance: This is a national consultation seeking public views on a potential proposal to give metro mayors and their combined authorities greater decision-making powers and accountability with regards to the Key Route Network (KRN). The key potential new powers include providing mayors with sole or concurrent highway powers over the KRN; giving mayoral combined authorities the ability to delegate highway powers to local authorities; providing mayors with the power to direct a local authority to deliver schemes agreed in their local transport plan; giving mayors or constituent local authorities the ability to request responsibility for a route by order of the Transport Secretary. There are clearly pros and cons to such a transfer of powers and responsibilities. The Transport Group would be interested to hear from any Association that has strong views in either direction.

Website address:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/key-route-networks-devolving-more-powers-and-responsibilities-for-locally-important-roads-to-metro-mayors-and-their-combined-authorities>

Cleveland Bridge

(i) Strategic Road Network/HGV Through Traffic in Bath

An officer report has been prepared for the Cabinet Meeting of 9 September: pages 33 to 84 of the [Cabinet Reports Pack](#). In summary, the officer recommendation to Cabinet is simply to go along with the national DfT Road Investment Strategy 2020-2025 which provides for a strategic review of the main strategic routes from the South Coast to the M4. In practice, this is a review which will not report for years, with any implementation taking years after that.

The Transport Group doesn't think this is good enough. In the last two years not only has the 18T weight limit highlighted the extent that through-traffic HGVs on the SRN normally impact on traffic flows across much of eastern and central Bath, but there have been significant and relevant changes. The Climate Emergency has led to national and local policy prioritisation of switching to Active Travel Modes. During the duration of the temporary weight limit and the pandemic the footfall on London Road and Cleveland Place has increased, and new successful businesses have opened, further encouraged due to the pandemic and emphasis on "build back better". These successes in increasing Active Travel and a walkable/cyclable environment will be reversed by return of the HGV through traffic.

With no apparent prospect of Wiltshire Council even being willing to accommodate a fairer share of North-South HGV traffic, it seems appropriate there should at least be a renewed consideration of an A4-A36 link road (an option that had strong support within FoBRA in the past). A priority should be thorough analysis of the CAZ ANPR data now being collected to gain a proper understanding of through traffic composition, with the findings being promptly made accessible to the public. As an immediate measure the Council should be taking account of the changed circumstances set out above and urgently considering what action it can take to mitigate impacts of re-opening the Bridge with no weight limit. If the HGV through-traffic is to be allowed to return the Council should say:

- (a) What they will do make the route safer and better for those walking and cycling including slowing/calming travel of HGV vehicles on this sensitive route through centres of dense population.
- (b) What will they do as an absolute priority to improve Active Travel infrastructure along the SRN (reflecting their own high-priority policies on Active Travel).
- (c) What they will do to encourage hauliers to continue using routes they are currently using and to avoid the Bridge being used by the even larger and/or heavier HGVs that the Government is already intending to introduce on UK roads.

Cleveland Bridge Works

Latest information is the bridge will re-open to traffic about 28 September. Expectation is there will be light controls on the bridge for a few weeks after re-opening to enable removal of scaffolding.

Clean Air Zone

This is also on the Agenda of the Cabinet meeting of 9 September, which includes a report on early progress and results, and proposals for minor amendments to the CAZ Order.

The officer report can be found on pages 85 to 178 of the [Cabinet Reports Pack](#). If your association area includes any locations where there have been concerns of possible displacement, your attention is directed to Appendix 2 of the officer report at pages 105 to 115 of the report pack, where information is given about investigations undertaken in a number of specific locations around

the city, together with a flow chart showing the process for such investigations. The overall report on air quality impact and on displacement impacts in certain locations are interesting and may have some indicative value but they must be viewed with the utmost caution due to the substantial disrupting factors of Covid and the Cleveland Bridge works. Realistically the reports prepared after the end of 2021 are likely to be more relevant.

There continues to be concern about the traffic lights at Queen Square, both in terms of the public realm impact with the proliferation of street furniture, and the significant disruption to traffic with consequential displacement into residential streets. The Transport Group is considering raising with FoBRA's Cabinet contact the question of whether the monitoring of displacement and air quality is in line with the recommendations that were made on this in the Peer Review.

The amendments to the Order include a minor change to the CAZ Boundary at Bathwick Hill, which appears to be designed to address an anomaly, and changes to clarify the charging status of certain motorcaravan and ambulance categories.

Other policies in development

Work on Liveable Neighbourhoods is expected to commence shortly. Local media have reported that the Transport Secretary has been asked to intervene in the plans for a City Centre Security Zone.

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